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Book Review

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Transformative Pedagogy in Architecture and Urbanism

By Ashraf. M. Salama

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Urbanism has always been a key feature in the Social Science discipline. Since its inception, Urbanism has caused much debate in many subject disciplines. From Human Geography to Sociology Urbanism, as a concept, has created different interpretations and as Fainstein and Campbell (1996) have argued, urbanism brings a whole host of political debates within the context of urban policy frameworks from a global perspective. Urbanism in its broadest sense refers to cities in urban areas. Leonard Reissman a sociologist has defined urbanism as a concept that ‘is inundating all areas of the world and its force is a testament to the nature of’ humans ‘and to the potency of the product that’ humans ‘have created’ (Reissman, 1964, pp. 9-10). Over the recent decade the social science discipline has witnessed a deluge of academic publications on studies on the urban process (see Birch, 2009; Davies and Imbroscio, 2009; Fyfe and Kenny, 2005; Shakur, 2005, Ward, 2005; Le Gates and Stout, 2003).



However, what is clear is that up until quite recently there has been a gap in the research on the relationship between Urbanism and Architecture. The author Ashraf Salama has had a long and established career in Architecture.

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He has been fascinated on how Architecture is pedagogically conceptualised within higher education. His book entitled 'Transformative Pedagogy in Architecture and Urbanism' focuses on the interactional process of the Built Environment and how this relates to learners and practitioners.

The book's forward is written by Henry Sanoff, calling on a new framework to Architecture which should be accomplished in five parts: (1) a commitment from ecological, social and democratic imperatives; (2) a redefine professional responsibility; (3) more emphasis on community responsibility; (4) collaborative links with education and research and (5) an emphasis on international Architectural framework.

The key emphasis of this book is from a personal perspective and Salama (2009, p. 23) states how the vision for Architecture and Urbanism lies in 'a continued exploration and investigation of the studio underlying rituals, teaching styles and learning outcomes, design processes and studio projects motivated me to develop this edition of a transformative pedagogy in Architecture and Urbanism.' The book has five distinct chapters that encompass the aspects of Architecture and Urbanism which are the conceptual framework, methodological application, educational approaches in Architecture, variations in design teaching practise and creating a new contemporary in the subject area. Throughout the book Salama provides excellent illustrations of architecture and urbanism. For example on page 40 he outlines the components of a theory for transformation pedagogy in the discipline of architecture and urbanism. Later on in Chapter four, Salama provides an absorbing discussion on the stages of the proposed process based studio teaching model which he updates from previous research. Overall this book gives a fascinating insight to urban studies and is a must buy for all architects and practitioners.

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